REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks presented herein.

The claims in the application are claims 2 to 8 and 10 to 16, all other claims having been cancelled.

Applicants' attorney wishes to thank the Examiner in charge of the application for the courtesies extended to him at the interview on August 13, 2003 at which time, the office action of April 17, 2003 was discussed.

The minor informalities noted by the Examiner in the office action have been corrected and the claims have been amended to obviate the 35 USC 112, second paragraph rejections. The term "optionally remote" has been deleted from the claims and it is believed that the claims now comply with 35 USC 112 and withdrawal of this ground of rejection is requested.

All of the claims were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over the MDS Health Group Limited reference, which, according to the Examiner, discloses a computer network involving several entities such as an operational entity and a preparation laboratory and further discloses functional steps of sequential and conditional validation as shown in the flow chart in Figures 2 and 5. The Examiner is of the opinion that the

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reference differs from the claim in that it does not disclose reinjecting the cells but this is well known in the art to perform dialysis treatment wherein blood cells are removed from the body and subsequently reinjected. In response to Applicants' arguments, the Examiner was of the opinion that MDS discloses an operational entity and a preparation laboratory having workstations. With respect to the inputting of the post-reinjection follow up information, the Examiner calls attention to the discussion of subsequent tests that may be performed on biological samples that can be entered into the computer system of the MDS.

Applicants respectfully traverse these grounds of rejection since the MDS reference does not anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention. MDS discloses an electronic work sheet system for microbiology testing and reporting comprising a workstation coupled to a data base containing information relative to patients and a microbiology data base which system provides with (1) assigning an identification number for accessing the data bases and for associating each tested sample with information relative to the concerned patient, (2) collecting data relative to the tests carried out on the sample by screen pages and (3) with delivering a report.

The MDS reference differs from the subject matter of claims15 and 16 in that it does not relate to a method for processing information used for quality management in a therapeutic process involving several entities including an operational entity, a preparation laboratory remote from the operational entity and a treatment center remote from the operational entity. MDS does not disclose, after each functional stage, a stage of

sequential and conditional validation of the said functional stage and it does not disclose a stage for inputting post reinjection follow-up information and forwarding said information to the said operational entity. The main thing is that there is validation step which must be verified before moving on to the next stage. The MDS system is directed to microbiology testing and reporting and not to quality management in a therapeutic process. This means the MDS system does not require the same level of reliability and security that the method and system for processing information used for quality management in a therapeutic process that finally results in a critical operation of cell reinjection to a patient.

In the MDS system, many of the functional stages such as, "input patient and specimen data into laboratory information system" or "scan test label to retrieve patient and specimen data" do not require to be systematically followed by a stage of sequential and conditional validation before moving on to the next functional stage. When a response to a test such as step 215 in Figure 2, is processed within the electronic worksheet of MDS, whatever the result of the test may be, the work flow is not stopped as illustrated in the diagrams of Figures 2 and 5.

Moreover, MDS is not concerned with the problem of post reinjection follow up information since it only deals with microbiology testing and reporting but not with a

therapeutic process. There is no suggestion whatsoever in MDS of the principal of a stage of sequential and conditional validation, after each functional stage, the completion of which is required before passing from the said functional stage to the following functional. Therefore, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is requested.

In view of the amendments to the claims and the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly point out Applicants' patentable contribution and favorable reconsideration of the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosures